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READING FOR TEACHERS OF SEX HYGIENE

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It is the purpose of this discussion to direct attention to a single phase of the problem of sex hygiene: the adequate training for teachers who are to give the instruction. The importance of such training is obvious when one considers that the character of one's knowledge and the conditions under which it has been attained largely determine his emotional reaction to a situation; and the discernment of individual needs, while largely a matter of tact and insight, also depends in great measure upon a broad and sure knowledge of the facts involved in the type of situation confronting us. Hence the valuable thing for educators seems to be a restatement of the aims of sexual education, and the study of the available materials and methods by which those who are directly or indirectly responsible for sex instruction—whether parents, teachers, administrators, or religious and social workers—can attain a due preparedness to achieve these ends.

The positive aims of sexual education, on its more elemental side, are physical and biological. They look toward sound physique and function, normal marriage, and a reasonable number of healthy offspring. These are cardinal, and we do right to direct primary attention to them. But it is as great a mistake to suppose that they express the whole of sexual education, as to assume that preparation to earn a living is the whole of education in general. Primary sexual functioning, in man even more than in the lower animals, normally falls into a comparatively inconspicuous place among his life-activities. On the other hand, the range of secondary sexual activity has been immensely increased in man, and has tinged many other phases of life with such numerous and varied colors that we cannot ignore sex if we would. It is absurd to suppose that these are not fit subjects for the attention of education, since they so profoundly affect life. We do not hesitate to assign

as a part of the aims of sexual education that the youth shall learn the graces of social life in relation to sex; that fashion shall be sane and refined in its expression of the sex instinct; that the sexual element in recreation shall be spontaneous without excess or morbidity; that a sexual selection which makes for individual happiness and racial well-being shall be exercised under the protection of a trained capacity for the judgment of sexual charms; that the erethic glow of art and religion shall find a due appreciation, drawing warmth from sex and imparting control to it; and that the finer graces and essential chivalry of ethics shall find a congenial soil.

In the face of these positive aims, we cannot but see the purely incidental nature of the negative propaganda which has hitherto dominated. There is need of prophylactic teaching, of course. Unhygienic and vicious habits must be prevented. Premature and violent sexual stimulation must be avoided. The association of the obscene with sex must be forestalled. Inhibitions of modesty and chastity must be imposed upon the sexual impulse; but it cannot be too strongly emphasized that these inhibitions, as heretofore imparted to girls, have often been of a perniciously indiscriminate nature.

What we are advocating as sexual education is a far larger thing than teaching the avoidance of certain vices. It is a thing of rich emotional and cultural possibilities, and must be approached from many angles, with as large and comprehensive and constructive an ideal as possible. So far as explicit school courses are concerned, we do well to leave it an integral part of biology or physiology; provided only that this refusal of a special place to it be not construed into a tacit admission of its unimportance or impropriety, resulting in its total neglect. In the studies named, the tendency is steadily in the direction of a careful scientific training for the teacher. But it often happens that such instruction is needed in schools where there is no trained biologist; that the rural-school teacher, the minister, and above all the parent finds an occasion when there is need for individual advice or instruction, for which he feels his inadequacy; that the principal or superintendent has to judge of the fitness of material, method, or teacher for formal sex

instruction; or that a firm and sure knowledge of sex problems is required of some man as a leader in the community, irrespective of his professional function. It is such situations that require a sane and constructive and unshrinking concept of sex, which cannot be made to order. For the benefit of those who may face these problems, we venture to suggest a series of studies which we think will serve the double purpose of leading the student of them into an adequate view of sex, and of aiding in the evaluation of the immense mass of literature from which these titles are selected.

The mature and educated person who has not studied the subject at all will perhaps require to be awakened to the *need of sexual education*. A large part of the periodical literature of sex has had this purpose. It would be too much to say that this literature is unduly an alarmist; but at least it is likely to convey an excessive emphasis on the pathological side, shockingly prevalent as that is. Some typical titles are:

- Addams, Jane. "A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil," *McClure's*, XXXVIII, 232-40. [This is one of a series, all valuable.]
- Henderson, Charles Richmond. "Education with Reference to Sex," *Eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education*. The University of Chicago Press, 1909. Pp. 74+89.
- Morrow, Prince A. *Social Diseases and Marriage*. New York: Lea Bros. & Co., 1904.

This material, soundly scientific as it is, must be regarded as inadequate just in proportion to its ease of acquisition. It merely directs attention to the field, and is entirely useless unless followed up with a constructive type of knowledge.

For the child, the real foundation for sexual education is not to be found in any printed literature, but in the habit of regarding organic nature as one great realm of genesis and growth, none of whose secrets is necessarily locked to him. This attitude can be imparted to any child in the grades by the *teaching of elementary biological facts* frankly and without the prudish exclusion of human reproductive processes which too generally mars such teaching. Training of this kind will at least give a point of view to which leaders of public thought can afterward appeal when these children need specific sex instruction, or themselves become parents and are confronted with the problem of instructing their own

children. Material of this kind is discussed in the following literature:

- Eddy, Walter H. "An Experiment in Teaching Sex Hygiene," *Jour. of Ed. Psy.*, II, 451-58.
- Eliot, Charles W. "School Instruction in Sex Hygiene," *Proc. of 5th Cong. of Amer. School Hygiene Ass'n*, pp. 114-20. New York, 1911.
- Foster, W. S. "School Instruction in Matters of Sex," *Jour. of Ed. Psy.*, II, 440-50.
- Hall, G. Stanley. "The Needs and Methods of Educating Young People in the Hygiene of Sex," *Ped. Sem.*, XV, 82-91.
- Henderson, C. R. *Op. cit.*
- McIntire, Charles. *The Teaching of Hygiene through Domestic Science and Nature-Study*. Easton, Pa.: Amer. Acad. of Med.
- Pheps, Jessie. "Biologic Teaching of Sex," *Amer. Ass'n for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality*: Trans. of First Annual Meeting, pp. 291-96. Baltimore, 1910.
- Putnam, Helen C. "The Practicability of Instruction in the Physiology and Hygiene of Sex as Demonstrated in Several Public Schools," *Boston Med. and Surg. Jour.*, CLVI (1907), 132-37.
- Putnam, Helen C. "Sex Instruction in High Schools," *Proc. of the Nat. Soc. for the Scientific Study of Education*, VIII (Part II), 76-82. (Bound with Henderson's monograph.)
- Schmitt, Clara. "The Teaching of the Facts of Sex in the Public Schools," *Ped. Sem.*, XVII, 229-41.
- Walter, H. S. "Biology and Sex Hygiene," *Educ.*, XXXII, 26-34.
- Zenner, Philip. *Education in Sexual Physiology and Hygiene*. Cincinnati: The Robert Clarke Co., 1910. Pp. viii+126.

The teacher, however, in order to speak from adequate knowledge, must know not only pathological conditions and have the normal biological attitude toward sex. The specifically *human physiology of sex and reproduction* should be studied in some standard college textbook if the teacher has not already acquired the knowledge in class. There are excellent chapters on the reproductive system in the following:

- Dearborn, George V. *A Textbook of Human Physiology*. New York: Lea & Febiger, 1908. Pp. 550.
- Martin, H. Newell. *The Human Body*. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 9th Ed., 1910. Pp. xvii+546.

This material fits one to impart only physiological knowledge, and that not of a particularly intricate nature. On the other hand, even the special teacher of high-school biology may have had a training in which the functions of cell growth and reproduction

were stressed, while the part of bisexuality in organic life and in human society was not explicitly studied. To this training then should be added a study of the important *biological and anthropological aspects of sex*, such as are to be found in the following:

Darwin, Charles. *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*. New York: Appleton, 1887. Pp. 688.

Ellis, Havelock. *Man and Woman*. New York: Scribner.

Geddes, Patrick, and Thompson, J. E. *The Evolution of Sex*. London: Scott. Rev. ed., 1901. Pp. xx+342.

Howard. *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 3 vols.

Westermarck. *A History of Human Marriage*.

Westermarck. *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*.

This stage of sex study, which may be regarded as the substance of that required by the college man or woman, should not be regarded as complete without some knowledge of the specifically *psychological problems of sex*. Those who are familiar with general psychology will find their point of departure in the place of instinct and emotion in human activity, as discussed by James (*Principles of Psychology*, chaps. xxiv and xxv), Dewey ("A Theory of Emotion," *Psy. Rev.*, I, 553-69; II, 13-32), Ribot (*The Psychology of the Emotions*. New York: Scribner), and McDougall (*Social Psychology*. Boston: Luce & Co.). The theory of emotion is well summarized by Angell (*Psychology*, chaps. xviii and xix).

In English, the best special treatments of sexual psychology at this level are the following:

Bell, Sanford. "A Preliminary Study of the Emotion of Love between the Sexes," *Amer. Jour. of Psy.*, XIII, 325-54.

Scott, Colin A. "Sex and Art," *Amer. Jour. of Psy.*, VII, 153-226.

The last-named is particularly full and illuminating. There would seem to be a gap in sex literature at this point, calling for a single volume of moderate size dealing with the psychology of sex and summarizing the valid and important conclusions of these, and of more elaborate studies to be mentioned presently. It does not appear either that the significant phenomena recorded by Bell on the question of so-called romantic love have attracted the further investigation which they deserve. No phenomena of human psychology are of greater value and significance for the emotional life of the individual and few touch more closely the fundamental

bonds of society; and yet none has received less intelligent treatment at the hands even of those scientists who have deigned to notice them at all. The question deserves a critical study, to ascertain the meaning of love in terms of biology and anthropology, and to free it from the vaporings of an overdone romanticism.

The teacher who has to deal largely with the matter will need to be familiar also with the *general views of the sex problem* arising out of the large experience of eminent physicians and scholars. Three such have come to us from the German; one is English. They are:

Bloch, Ivan. *The Sexual Life of Our Times*.

Ellis, Havelock. *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI (cited below).

Forel, A. *The Sexual Question*. New York: Rebman Co., 1908. Pp. xv+536.

Moll, Albert. *The Sexual Life of the Child*. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. xv+339. \$1.75.

The writer has not had the privilege of seeing Bloch's work. Forel's is a standard. Moll has dealt with a most important phase of the problem in a way which is invaluable to the teacher, if he possesses the larger view of sex to which the course of reading here suggested is intended to lead. Before undertaking any of these volumes the student should be sure that he can assimilate the pathological sources which they use.

At this stage of study the teacher should be prepared to evaluate independently the flood of books intended to convey *sex instruction for the untrained*. Generally speaking, these books are makeshifts. The best of them are of the class issued by the American Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis. There are a number of books for young people which are reasonably free from objection, such as the following:

Educational Pamphlets of the American Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis. New York: Lea Bros. & Co.

No. 1. *The Young Man Problem*.

No. 2. *Instruction in the Physiology and Psychology of Sex*. (For teachers.)

No. 3. *The Relations of Social Diseases with Marriage, and Their Prophylaxis*.

No. 4. *The Boy Problem*. (For parents and teachers.)

No. 5. *How My Uncle the Doctor Instructed Me in Matters of Sex*. (From the German.)

No. 6. *Health and the Hygiene of Sex*. (For college students.)

- Morley, Margaret. *Life and Love*. Chicago: McClurg, 1895. Pp. 214.
\$1.25.
- Morley, Margaret. *A Song of Life*. Chicago: McClurg, 1891. Pp. 155.
\$1.25.
- Wilder, Burt G. *What Young People Should Know*. (Well and copiously illustrated.)

There are admirable summaries and criticisms of such material in the following:

- Barnes, Earl. "Books and Pamphlets Intended to Give Sex Information," *Studies in Education* (Stanford University, 1897), II, 301-8.
- Henderson, C. H. *Op. cit.*
- Parkinson, William D. "Sex and Education," *Ed. Rev.*, XLI, 42-59.
- "Some Recent Literature on Sex Education and Sex Hygiene," *Jour. of Ed. Psy.*, II, 464-70.

The objection to the literature criticized in the last four titles is that it singles out sex and centers attention upon it. The true attitude is summed up admirably by Parkinson. A wholesome view of sex makes it an integral part of life, so that specific instruction need not come with an air of constraint.

The last volume of Ellis' great work has already been cited as in the same class with those of Bloch, Forel, and Moll. As a whole, however, we may cite it as constituting the next higher phase of the subject, namely, the *exhaustive study of the entire problem from the sources*. It is a work beyond the needs of the ordinary teacher, and attains a minuteness of analysis that is only excelled in the *monographs* which deal at first hand with the specialist's phases of the subject. Ellis' work is:

- Ellis, Havelock. *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Philadelphia: F. A. Davis & Co. 6 vols.

In conclusion, we may be permitted to say from personal experience that sex instruction is neither so easy as some enthusiasts would have us believe, nor so impossible as would appear to the apprehensive conventionality of those whose lips have always been sealed to the subject. It should not be attempted, except in emergency, without a definite and sure knowledge beyond that which is to be imparted. This knowledge, in our opinion, need not be that of the biological specialist, but only the acquaintance which every educated person is presumed to have with the fundamentals of biology.